5: Métraux E-4 (no date) 1948 SM4 Guarani SM4



178 a cabo (Vogt, 1904, p. 203). Today the number of Indians under the
622 authority of a chief vary from 20 to about 100.
621 The members of the ancient *Guaraní* communities built the houses of their chiefs and tilled their fields and harvested their crops (Ruiz de Montoya, 1892, p. 49).

685 **Law and order.**—It is only about modern *Caingué* communities that
756 there is some information on justice and law. Thieves are detected by
695 shamans, who touch each suspected man on the chest near the heart. If
684 the fingers leave a red mark, the man is guilty. A stolen wife must be
682 returned with a present. In case of murder, if the criminal's relatives do not pay the wergild to prevent a feud, the offended family takes the punishment into its own hands.

576 **Etiquette.**—Among ancient *Guaraní*, when a guest entered a hut, he
574 was surrounded by women who wailed and enumerated the deeds of his dead relatives. The guest covered his face with his hands and shed a few tears. The amount of crying and wailing was proportionate to the importance of the visitor (Ruiz de Montoya, 1892, p. 52).

### LIFE CYCLE

843 **Birth and naming.**—Even in modern days, a pregnant woman must
846 avoid any food that might make her child abnormal. After childbirth, the father lies in his hammock until the infant's navel cord falls off, re-
842 fraining from activities thought harmful to the baby. The *Apapocuva*
775 believe that babies are reincarnated dead people, hence one of the shaman's
756 first tasks is to identify the returning spirit and, by means of his super-
789 natural power, to obtain a magic substance to be rubbed into the child's
851 body. Infant baptism, though Catholic in many respects, is permeated
177 by ancient rites and beliefs. Names refer to mythical beings or to sacred
178 objects associated with the place on the horizon from which the soul is
551 supposed to have come. Children may be very closely identified with
77 the deities of the Upper World, and those from the west, the abode of Tupã, may receive a miniature of the bench symbolic of their divine name-
553 sake. In case of danger, especially if a person is sick, his name is changed
851 and a new ceremony of baptism is performed (Nimuendajú, 1914 a, pp. 302–303).

881 **Boys' initiation.**—A *Caingué* boy undergoes something of an initiation rite when, prior to puberty, his lower lip is perforated for the insertion of
[273] a labret. After a group of boys has been somewhat anesthetized with beer,
[412] a specialist perforates each boy's lower lip with a wooden or deer-horn
[237] awl and prays to Tupã that the labret may protect its wearer against death.
[273] For the three following days the initiates eat only maize mush. After
[195] their initiation they drop the infantile "u, u" (yes) for the adult masculine "ta."